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**COVER PAGE**

Innovation Study Title City-County Strategic Plan Alignment: A unified vision and

mission for the community

Category Partnerships

Jurisdiction Name City of Durham, NC & Durham County, NC

City/County Manager Thomas J. Bonfield-City Manager

Mike Ruffin-County Manager

Population City - 231,706

County- 267,587

**Submit Innovation Study for an Alliance Innovation Award Yes [X] No [ ]**

**Would you like your application to be considered for the Rapid Fire Session? Yes ( ) No (X)**

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Alliance for Innovation

**Innovation Study Application**

7/20/12

[www.durhamnc.gov](http://www.durhamnc.gov)

[www.durhamcountync.gov](http://www.durhamcountync.gov)

***About the City of Durham and Durham County***

The City of Durham, NC is located in North Carolina’s eastern piedmont region to the northeast of the state’s geographical center. Durham is the fourth largest city in the state and the only municipality in Durham County. The City of Durham has a population of 228,000 and a total FY13 Budget of $373 million, with the general fund portion being $176 million. The City has 2,381 full-time employees and 24 departments, Police, Fire, Public Works, and Water Management, to name a few.

Durham County is located in the research triangle region of the North Carolina Piedmont and has approximately 270,000 residents. Durham County government has roughly 1,800 employees from departments such as Public Health, the Library, EMS, and the Board of Elections. Durham County’s total Budget for FY12-13 is $496.8 million.

***SYNOPSIS***

1. **Intent of the project/program/service**

The Strategic Plan alignment process between the City of Durham and Durham County began in early 2011. Durham County consulted the City of Durham when starting their strategic planning process, knowing that the City was approximately one year ahead of the County in its development. With a strong recommendation, the County decided to use the same consultant and methodology as the City, which set up the framework for strong plan alignment since both governments used the same process for a Strategic Plan document.

The City’s Project Manager began meeting with the County’s Project Manager in an effort to share information, knowing that they could learn from their respective successes and challenges guiding the Strategic Plans at each organization. Since the City was further ahead in the process, the City’s Project Manager had more to offer; however, the organizations had intended all along to create a two-way-street model of information and resource sharing.

When the Durham County Commission approved the County’s Strategic Plan in February 2012, City and County officials met to begin laying out plans for tangible steps in plan alignment. Early steps included establishing recurring quarterly meetings between City and County Goal Champions and creating “Joint Initiatives,” or projects of overlap, between the two plans, which can be completed in a collaborative manner.

The City-County Strategic Plan alignment is intended to accomplish three things: (1) develop a unified vision and mission for the community; (2) establish a partnership that will allow projects to be completed as efficiently as possible; and (3) form relationships between City and County staff.

1. **Costs, if any**

Neither the City nor the County at this time has incurred or anticipates incurring any direct costs due to this partnership. The costs to this point have been primarily for staff and printing. That said, as the partnership grows and more activities come from it, each organization may need to invest some funds and additional staff resources to support it. However, this partnership is intended to be an efficient, low-cost collaboration that takes advantage of existing resources to produce visible accomplishments for the public and fosters relationships between City and County staff.

1. **Savings, if any**

At this point, no tangible savings have come from this partnership. However, it is the hope of both the City and the County that by collaborating on multiple initiatives, each organization will be able to work more efficiently and share resources in a way that benefits Durham City and County taxpayers.

1. **Identify innovative characteristics and explain how they improved the organization**

The partnership between the City of Durham and Durham County government has yielded several innovative approaches to strategic planning. First and foremost, the City and County are sharing the same **strategic plan methodology** forging a stronger alignment. This shared methodology and similar plan structure is unusual, yet beneficial. It is also uncommon for local governments in neighboring jurisdictions to align their strategic plans**.**

For many years, the elected officials from both the City and County have continuously expressed the need to work more collaboratively, but this has been inconsistent at best over the years. The strategic plans have been the instruments bringing the organizations closer together, ultimately improving communication and partnership.

The City and County Goal Champions (responsible for oversight on the goal initiatives) continue to meet regularly to discuss joint initiatives, identify resources, and review action plans. Not only has the partnership improved communication between city and county staff, but also within each organization. A “silo” mentality has existed between the governments making communication a challenge and an important focus moving forward. With the implementation of the strategic plans, departments are now working on initiatives together, leading to improved efficiency and better service delivery to its residents.

A major benefit of the plan alignment has been the ability to share resources. In an economy where having to “do more with less” is the norm, the pooling of resources has already had successful results and is viewed as having great potential. It’s not uncommon to see the City’s Fire Department working with County staff to increase community capacity for bystander medical response by promoting CPR and Automated External Defibrillator (AED) awareness; or working together to improve environmental awareness and participation through the use of grassroots media efforts and incentives; or even cataloguing leadership development opportunities and looking at ways to share resources.

The alignment did not happen overnight. Prior to the adoption of the County’s strategic plan, the City and County project managers met to share some of the lessons learned from the City’s process and also discuss the significance of a well-structured implementation process.

In an effort to promote progress, transparency, accountability, and plan alignment, a link for the city’s performance management system dashboard ([www.durhamnc.gov/strategicplan/goals](http://www.durhamnc.gov/strategicplan/goals) ) will appear prominently on the yet to be developed county dashboard and vice versa.

The **joint city/county initiative process** has been a step in the right direction for both organizations. This is the first time in recent memory that a combined, structured effort has been taken to partner on initiatives.

In order to identify potential joint initiatives **(Attachment A),** the City and County Goal Champions were asked to review and recommend one initiative, associated with each goal, to be implemented during FY 2012-13. Their recommendations were then reviewed and approved by both the City and County Managers. Following approval, the Goal Champions were required to schedule recurring meetings over the next 12 months to begin work on the initiatives. An action plan was created to include action items, responsible person(s), target completion date, completion date, and important milestones.

It was critical that some early successes could be demonstrated to keep the momentum and energy level high. A few of the initiatives were identified as “low hanging fruit” along with several that were more comprehensive in nature and that could have a greater impact on the community. In year one of this alignment process, the focus has been on building bridges, enhancing communication, improving service delivery to our residents, and creating greater governmental efficiencies.

Elected officials and residents will be periodically updated on the progress of joint city-county initiatives. Residents will also have an opportunity during the annual citywide strategic plan update in December 2012, to provide input on current initiatives and possible recommendations for future joint initiatives.

Lastly, a **prioritization model (Attachment B)** is being developed to rank and weight joint city-county initiatives. There was no method in place to rank the joint initiatives, so benchmarking was conducted along with the posting of questions on listervs, to identify different prioritization models. A hybrid model was created that includes benefit metrics with weights (strategic plan goal alignment, influences city/county enhancements, value to employees, etc.). Feasibility metrics were also included to rank ease of implementation, likelihood of success, low cost to implement, low political repercussions, etc.

Future initiatives will be graded using this prioritization tool providing a final rank based on the benefits of a given project and its feasibility. The recommendations will be shared with both the City and County administrations for approval, prior to implementation.

1. **Obstacles, if any (including new issues, problems or unintended consequences)**

To this point, this partnership has presented few challenges. However, there are a couple of early obstacles that the City and County Project Managers, have had to address.

While there is a strong alignment between the two Strategic Plan documents, because quite simply the City provides some services that the County does not provide and vice versa. These service delivery differences have challenged the City and County to think innovatively and creatively about ways to link particular Strategic Plan Goal Champions. In other words, there have been some goals where it has been slightly harder to identify joint initiatives and specific ways for City and County Goal Champions to partner. However, this challenge also can be seen as an opportunity, giving Strategic Plan managers a chance to truly focus on priority issues where overlap is most natural (e.g, economic development, environment and public safety, among others). The City and County administrations have made a concerted effort not to create alignment where none naturally exists, instead prioritizing the most natural areas for collaboration.

Another challenge that can be seen as an opportunity is the fact that the City is farther ahead on its Strategic Plan implementation than the County. City staff involved in the plan has seen the natural responses of pushback, hesitation and concern that come from any new, huge undertaking like a Strategic Plan. Enough time has passed in the City’s Implementation phase to demonstrate early wins and allow both the City and County officials to get comfortable with the process. When both organizations began formally convening their Goal Champions, the County was mere months away from passing its plan, so as expected there was some minor pushback on collaboration, mostly because of anxiety about an additional time commitment and more work. The Project Managers have communicated regularly and effectively to anticipate concerns and directly address them with Goal Champions in meetings. They will continue to look out for these sentiments and find productive ways of addressing concern and harnessing that energy into positive collaborative action.

1. **Outcomes – cost savings for citizens, any performance measures information, etc.**

**Anticipated Outcomes:**

This project focused on the partnership between the City of Durham and Durham County government and the alignment of their strategic plans and joint initiatives. Many outcomes were anticipated from the onset including:

* A more transparent government, improved communication, accountability, and a more engaged and informed citizenry and news media;
* Building a better understanding of the Strategic Plan alignment, by both City and County staff and residents;
* Service delivery efficiencies;
* Cost savings based on shared resources;
* Higher performing organizations;
* Development of Prioritization Model to rank joint initiatives;
* Process and ranking system to fund new joint-initiatives;
* New performance measures focusing on efficiency and effectiveness;
* Greater collaboration on special projects between city and county governments;
* Summer Youth Program training
* CPR and Automated External Defibrillator (AED) awareness and training
* Support from elected officials;
* Additional participation from residents on joint initiative teams and;
* Residents will have a better understanding of services provided by the City and County.

**Actual Outcomes:**

Plan alignment began in earnest in spring 2012. Early outcomes include:

* Establishment of recurring quarterly meetings between City and County Goal Champions. This forum is expected to be an efficient method of information sharing and relationship building;
* Identification and implementation of five joint initiatives for FY13; **(Attachment C)**
* Prioritization model to rank joint initiatives;
* Increased transparency and accountability and;
* Improved communication between organizations.

1. **Applicable results and Real World practicality**
2. What practical applications will be shared?

* Joint Initiative methodology
* Initiative Prioritization Model

1. How applicable is the idea/program/project/service to other local governments?

* The methodology is applicable to all size governments
* The Prioritization Model is appropriate to use for both strategic plan initiatives and process improvement projects
* The Goal Champion team structure and initiative tracking process is critical to ensure success

1. **Was a private consultant used?**

No, a private consultant was not used for plan alignment. However, as stated earlier in this application, the City and County used the same consultant for their respective Strategic Planning methodology, and that arrangement certainly aided both organizations in being able to quickly start working together on plan alignment since they used the same planning mechanism.

1. **Other – additional information**

**PRESENTATION STYLE**

* **PowerPoint or Prezi, with embedded videos**
* Highlight process background
* Imbed video clips of city/county joint goal champion meetings/discussions
* Imbed video clips highlighting joint initiatives in action and select joint initiative activities
* **Interactive group activity**
* Clicker (Audience Response System) exercise focusing on city/county plan alignment and the importance of collaboration
* Small group breakouts
* **Handout materials**
  + A one-sheet handout on key achievements and lessons learned
  + Prioritization Model

**Addendum**

**Attachment A**

 

**Joint City/County Initiative Recommendations**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **City Goals** | **County Goals** |
| 1.Strong and Diverse Economy | 1. Community and Family Prosperity and enrichment |
| 2. Safe and Secure Community | 2. Health and Well Being for All |
| 3. Thriving Livable Neighborhoods | 3. Safe and Secure Community |
| 4. Well Managed City | 4. Environmental Stewardship |
| 5. Stewardship of City’s Physical Assets | 5. Accountable, Efficient, and Visionary Government |

**City Goal 1 and County Goal 1**

**Summer Youth**

* Enhance the summer youth work program through the City and County in Summer 2013 by:
  + Planning and implementing training activities for summer youth workers, prior to the start of their summer work experiences.
  + Planning and implementing enrichment activities for summer youth workers (brown bag lunches with speakers, field trips, etc.

**City Goal 2/County Goal 3**

**CPR and Defibrillator Awareness and Training**

* Increase community capacity for bystander medical response by promoting CPR and AED awareness, training and certifications to County Staff, DPS and the community

**City Goal 3/County Goal 4**

**Environmental Education**

* Use social media, public service announcements, television and public schools to increase environmental awareness and participation.

**City Goal 3/County Goal 2**

**Health Education**

* Provide community outreach about key health related issues through enhanced communications and public education.
  + *This initiative would include collaboration with the City’s Neighborhood Improvement Services to share health-related resources at community meetings and events.*

**City Goal 4/County Goal 5**

**Manage talent and ensure continuity of leadership**

* Catalogue leadership development opportunities each organization has in place, find ways to collaborate and share resources and develop measures to gauge the success of the programs. This joint initiative could include collaboration on performance measures, as well as an employee opinion survey.

**City Goal 5/County Goal 1**

**Beautification:**

* Select key interchanges for beautification project. Two current options are Mangum/NC 147 interchange or Roxboro/NC 147 interchange.
* Establish a multi-jurisdictional (City, County, NCDOT) task force to scope the effort, identify internal resources to execute improvements and look at leveraging public/private involvement (e.g., Capital Broadcasting, Scientific Properties, and other major property owners in the corridors). The beautification effort would be guided by the concepts within the adopted Central Gateways Plan.

**Attachment B (see attached Prioritization Matrix)**

**Attachment C**

**New Initiatives Form: FY 2013**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Department** | | | | **Priority Among all Department New Initiatives**  **(1 is highest priority)** | | |
|  | | | |  | | |
| **Program** | | | | **Org Code** | | |
|  | | | |  | | |
| **Title of New Initiative** | | | | | | |
|  | | | | | | |
| **Which of the five City goals does this initiative support?**[***City Goals and Initiatives***](http://durham-intranet:8080/sites/budget/Dept%20Budget%20Contacts/Training%20and%20Manuals/City%20Goals%20and%20Initiatives.docx) | | | | **What city-wide initiative does this department initiative request support?** [***City Goals and Initiatives***](http://durham-intranet:8080/sites/budget/Dept%20Budget%20Contacts/Training%20and%20Manuals/City%20Goals%20and%20Initiatives.docx) | | |
|  | | | |  | | |
| **Start Date** | **End Date** | | **Major Milestones** | | | |
|  |  | |  | | | |
| **Responsible Individual, Team, Program, etc.** | | | | | | |
|  | | | | | | |
| **Overall Initiative Objectives** | | | | | | |
|  | | | | | | |
| **Describe the critical, immediate need this initiative will address. Include supporting data.** | | | | | | |
|  | | | | | | |
| **What will be accomplished that is not currently being accomplished? Why is this critical to the City?** | | | | | | |
|  | | | | | | |
| **Resources Needed for this Initiative *Add rows as needed.*** | | | | | | |
| |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | | Item | Description | FY13 | FY14 | FY15 | FY16 | FY17 | |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | | TOTALS |  |  |  |  |  |  | | | | | | | |
| **FTE Detail *Add rows as needed.*** | | | | | | |
| |  |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | | Title | Job Class | Salary | Benefits | Total | Start Date | |  |  |  |  |  |  | |  |  |  |  |  |  | |  |  |  |  |  |  | | TOTALS |  |  |  |  |  | | | | | | | |
| **Revenues Associated with this Initiative *Add rows as needed.*** | | | | | | |
| |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | | Item | Description | FY13 | FY14 | FY15 | FY16 | FY17 | |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | | TOTALS |  |  |  |  |  |  | | | | | | | |
| **Describe how this initiative will address Council and Departmental Goals.** | | | | | | |
|  | | | | | | |
| **Workload Measures (*Include at least one*)** | | | | | | |
|  | | | | | | |
| **Efficiency Measures (*Include at least one*)** | | | | | | |
|  | | | | | | |
| **Effectiveness Measures (*Include at least one*)** | | | | | | |
|  | | | | | | |
| **In-target alternative: If no new resources could be allocated, what service or program could be eliminated or reduced to allow the department to fund this program within the target budget? How would this impact service delivery?** | | | | | | |
|  | | | | | | |
| **Tom Bonfield** | | **Wanda Page** | | **Ted Voorhees** | | **Keith Chadwell** |
|  | |  | |  | |  |
| **Not for department use: The section below is reserved for Goal Champion comments and prioritization.** | | | | | | |
| **Goal Champion Comments** | | | | | **Priority ranking among all goal related initiatives**  **(1 is highest priority)** | |
|  | | | | |  | |